

**2008 Hira & Sunita Jain Endowment Fund Scholar  
Shrina Amin**



Receiving a book on her 21st birthday was not exactly in Shrina Amin's ideal version of a grand celebration, even if that book was Mahatma Gandhi's *An Autobiography or The Story of my Experiments with Truth* (First Edition, 1927; Reprint by Beacon Press, 1993 - foreword by Sissela Bok). But ever since she finished reading it, the path seems to have been paved for her in ways that still amazes her.

The Dr. Hira and Mrs. Sunita Jain Endowment Fund awarded its 2008 Scholarship in the amount of \$2,000 to the Sociology major, with a minor in India Studies, who is also conducting an Independent Study project on "Contemporary Hindu and Muslim Relationship in the State of Gujarat, India: 2000 to present". And after taking a series of classes in Asian American and Ethnic Literature, she is looking at how she can fulfil the requirements of the Asian American Studies minor, too.

Shrina Amin vows to apply herself even harder - only 21 and already possessed of a firm set of guiding principles and a serious work ethic. She plans to continue on to graduate studies, comparing youth culture in the United States and India, where she expects to work for a few years, and also volunteer at orphanages, in her spare time.

While identifying as an Indian American and a U.S. citizen, Amin is keenly aware of being treated as a perpetual foreigner in both India and the United States, where she is equally at home. "I am living a double life and taking the best of both worlds which I am constantly negotiating," she told AASI's Fe Delos-Santos for this profile. Her views about identity, ethnicity and structural analysis have been deeply influenced by Bandana Purkayastha, Assoc. Professor in Sociology and Asian American Studies, who authored *Negotiating Ethnicity* with Rutgers University Press.

Asked about her sources of inspiration, Shrina Amin is quick to say that her hero is her mom, whom she calls "the smile that happens when I do something. Everything I do is for her. A hero is the one [who] has the most impact on your life." It was Shrina's mom who gave her Gandhi's book for her 21st birthday. Amin is also profoundly inspired by her maternal grandmother who marched with Mahatma Gandhi, whose granddaughter Ela Gandhi Amin was honored to meet at UConn in October, 2007.